

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102609

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, SL (STEVENS, SIAKA P.)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT STEVENS' MEETING WITH ASSISTANT
SECRETARY DAVIS

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT STEVENS ARRIVED NEW YORK SATURDAY, APRIL 26, AND WAS GREETED BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS WHO PRESENTED HIM WITH A WELCOMING LETTER FROM PRESIDENT FORD. DAVIS DISCUSSED CURRENT STATUS GOSL/BETH STEEL NEGOTIATIONS. PRESIDENT VISIBLY PLEASED BY PRESENCE LARGE CROWD OF WELL-WISHERS, MOSTLY SIERRA LEONEANS. END SUMMARY

2. DAVIS PRESENTED STEVENS PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER (TEXT BELOW) AND THANKED HIM FOR FRIENDLY TREATMENT ACCORDED AMB. SAMUELS. DAVIS EXPRESSED HIS DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND AFRICA. IN RESPONSE, STEVENS ASKED THAT DAVIS CONVEY HIS THANKS TO PRESIDENT FORD FOR SENDING LETTER, AND THANKED DAVIS FOR HIS WARM WELCOME.

3. STEVENS THEN RAISED SUBJECT BETH STEEL NEGOTIATIONS
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INDICATING HE WILLING TO SIGN AGREEMENT GIVING BETH STEEL
53 PER CENT CONTROLLING INTEREST IN RUTILE PROJECT.
STEVENS INSISTED HE CANNOT ACCEDE TO BETHLEHEM'S DEMAND

THAT HE ALSO SIGN ASSURANCE BETH STEEL WOULD RETAIN MAJORITY

INTEREST FOREVER AS THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE RENOUNCEMENT
GOSL MINING POLICY. RE GOSL REFUSAL TO REAFFIRM IN
WRITING 1972 CONCESSION AGREEMENT PROVISION ALLOWING
SRL DUTY-FREE IMPORT OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, STEVENS
ARGUED THAT THIS WAS CONCLUDED AS A "SIDE AGREEMENT",
BY AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS, AND WAS NOT INTEGRAL PART OF
OVERALL 1972 AGREEMENT. HE THEREFORE CONCLUDED THAT THIS
ISSUE SHOULD BE RENEGOTIATED IN SIMILAR FASHION, I.E. IT
SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED AS PROVISION OF LONG-RANGE AGREE-
MENT. PRESIDENT STEVENS SAID HE FAVORS SEPARATE AGREE-
MENTS TO COVER THE DELCO AND TONKILILI IRON ORE CONCES-
SIONS BECAUSE DELCO OPERATING FOR SEVERAL YEARS, AND
PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY DELCO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE EN-
COUNTERED IN NEGOTIATING AN AGREEMENT ON UNEXPLOITED
TONKILILI. HE SAID BETH STEEL FAVORS ONE AGREEMENT COVER-
ING BOTH CONCESSIONS. PRESIDENT STEVENS SAID HE REMAINS
HOPEFUL, HOWEVER, AND IS CONFIDENT MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE
AGREEMENT IN SIGHT.

4. DAVIS THEN ESCORTED STEVENS TO WAITING LIMOUSINE FOR
TRIP INTO NEW YORK.

5. TEXT OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER PRESENTED TO STEVENS
FOLLOWS: "DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: IT IS A PLEASURE FOR ME
TO WELCOME YOU AND THE MEMBERS OF YOUR DELEGATION TO THE
UNITED STATES. SIERRA LEONE'S MANY FRIENDS IN THIS
COUNTRY JOIN ME IN EXTENDING THIS WELCOME.

"I AM AWARE OF THE PROGRESS YOU HAVE MADE IN THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SIERRA LEONE. THE UNITED STATES
HAS BEEN PLEASED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS DEVELOPMENT
EFFORT AND WISHES YOU CONTINUED SUCCESS IN THIS CRITICAL
ENDEAVOR. WE DEEPLY APPRECIATE THE WARM HOSPITALITY
YOU HAVE SHOWN THE HUNDREDS OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS
AND THE OPPORTUNITY YOU HAVE AFFORDED THEM TO WORK WITH
THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE IN ITS DEVELOPMENT
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PROGRAMS.

"PLEASE ACCEPT MY BEST WISHES FOR THE REMAINDER OF YOUR
TRIP. SINCERELY, GERALD R. FORD"

KISSINGER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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